



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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OUR WORK.

HOUSE OF EDUCATION, AMBLESIDE.

Report on Examination in the Theory and Practice of Teaching (Method, History, Psychology and Practical Teaching), Christmas, 1903.

The answers to the paper of questions on Method confirm the inference which I had already been enabled to draw from the lessons which had a few weeks earlier been given before me. It is clear from both that very successful endeavour has been made to impress on the students the aims which ought to be kept in view by every teacher. Such right ideas the students have actually imbibed, and will doubtless carry into their future practice. They have also, in regard to the technicalities of the details of teaching, been placed on the right track. The questions set, while dealing partly with such matters as had directly formed subject of instruction, gave also scope for exercise of judgment. In the degree of success with which difficulties were met in the replies, difference was of course preceptible. Many of the students shewed clearly marked ability, and—what is of more importance—seldom was anything advanced which struck a false educational note.

Somewhat greater inequality was exhibited in the answers in History of Education and Psychology. It was apparent, however, upon the face of the papers that there had been genuine study of the subjects, and that the main lines had been well placed before the students. Many of the answers on questions out of the ordinary groove pleased me much by the sure grasp of the point and the clear and sensible treatment adopted.

I append the Class List:—

CLASS I.	CLASS II.	CLASS III.
{ B. M. GOODE	D. L. THOMSON	A. G. ROFFE
{ H. E. WIX	M. J. WOOLER	
A. M. COX	M. E. WILLIS	
E. M. BROOKES	{ M. MART	
D. BROWNELL	{ W. A. WHITE	
W. TIBBITS	M. L. WILSON	

Failed:—R. H. HOLLINS.

December 23rd, 1903.

C. H. PAREZ.

REPORT ON VISIT.

On my arrival on the evening of October 28th, I had the pleasure afforded me of being made a spectator of an amusing French play. This had been prepared by the junior students. On the following evening some Tennysonian tableaux-vivants had been studiously arranged by the juniors for my benefit. Occasional performances of this kind, when entered into with zest, as these evidently were, help to keep alive without constraint a perception and enjoyment of the pleasure to be derived from literary culture, and are certainly to be on that account encouraged. In the French play, good accent was combined with an evident at-homeness in French conversation. *Seria ludo miscere*, is an art which is well understood at the House of Education. In this connection should be mentioned the physical exercises and the manual crafts. Dexterity in the latter is of course of importance for those who are intending to occupy themselves in

educating our children. Bookbinding, repoussé work, leather and basket work, etc., have been done under the superintendence of Miss Barnett, and, I can only say, in a way to excite admiration.

The physical exercises are of a varied character; some, carried out under the guidance of a capable Army sergeant, being directed to physical development; others, given in the house, are framed after the model of Mrs. Wordsworth's well-known method, and are directed more to the production of graceful deportment, though not merely useful to that end alone. Some of the Swedish exercises are also undertaken. Whilst affording relief from the strain of mental work, these exercises are nevertheless carried out with energy and precision—without which, indeed, they would be of little value.

A somewhat recreative kind of occupation is to be found also in the lessons on cookery—cookery, however, of an advanced kind, and in which, under the direction of Miss Firth, scientific knowledge is combined with delicate tactual art.

To pass to the more directly intellectual work, the lessons given by the regular or occasional members of the staff, as well as those given before me by the senior students, demand notice. All the seniors taught before me, and the marks assigned are taken into account, together with the answers in the written examination, in forming the Class List. The instruction in the art of teaching devolves, on account of its superior importance, mainly upon the Principal and Vice-Principal, and it is scarcely needful to say that the prime motive put forward by them as that which should actuate the teachers is the awakening of attention through interest. Other matters besides this main one receive attention, and thus, aided moreover by the psychological studies, every student before leaving the House of Education is made practically conversant with proper methods.

All the staff gave model lessons before me; those in modern languages, of little formal yet of genuinely instructive character, by Mademoiselle Mottu and Fraülein Diez. Under the leading of the former, a passage from "Richard II." was translated into French by means of the Gouin method, whilst the students also shewed their facility in French by translating another passage by themselves.

Fraülein Diez exercised the powers of her class in German by leading them to translate a short anecdote given in Italian into the former language, the rendering being made first merely literally, and then into idiomatic phrase and proper German order.

Both these lessons were genuinely stimulating, and at the same time thoroughly enjoyable.

A special feature of the work, and a very praiseworthy one, is the introduction of lessons on what is modestly called voice production, but which, while it partakes rightly of that character, goes beyond that object and is really of the nature of elocution. An excellent lesson of this kind was given before me by Miss Barnett, one which could not be too highly commended.

Lessons requiring more serious effort of attention were also given, one on art, by Miss Sumner, and one on physiology, by Miss Stirling, both teachers being thoroughly conversant with their respective subjects.

Besides the subjects of instruction which have come under notice in the above, the time table makes provision for the study of the theory and history, as well as for the practice of education, of vocal and instrumental music, the former on the Tonic Sol-fa system, of mathematics, of Latin, of out-of-door nature work, and of French grammar, literature and history; the students of each year being grouped for this last in accordance with their actual attainments. So full and extensive a time table may well excite wonder and almost incredulity, but the possibility of carrying it out effectively, and that without injury to the health of the students, is due partly of course to careful arrangement; in great part to the spirit of loyalty and affection which attaches all the inmates to the gentle sway of the Principal, and which renders labour easily endured. One other cause, however, ought to be noted, especially as it is a distinguishing feature of the system of the House, viz., the avoidance of that waste of time and energy in continual writing in exercise books which too often mars the work of modern educational institutions. By the system adopted here, however, economy of the students' time is secured, and they are directed towards the habit of economising the time of those who shall hereafter be under their instruction. Without such system, the very full scheme of work of the Ambleside House would be impossible to carry through. On the other hand also, in view of the importance of opening out to our children as full a life as possible, and of making as great use as possible of the ever-multiplying fresh avenues of interest, scarcely anything seems to be of greater importance for our future teachers than the inculcation of the most economical use of time.

To witness how many tasks are endured here, without being felt as task work, has been a great gratification to myself; a still greater satisfaction is afforded by the thought that the healthy mental habitudes fostered here will be carried into many a home, and will brighten and expand many a young life.

C. H. PAREZ,
Vicar of Mentmore;

Formerly one of H.M. Chief Inspectors of Schools.

Report on the Nature Note Books for 1903.

I have practically read through the whole of the fourteen note books sent; and I have found the same difficulty as last year in making two classes out of the students. These classes I am pleased to call, the "Very Good," and the "Good." There is nothing lower than this. The second class indeed differs from the first, chiefly in respect of quantity of matter, though one or two students betray a little hurry in making notes, leading at times to illegible writing and careless spelling.

Speaking generally, there is, however, the same delightful enthusiasm and spontaneity, the same right spirit as before. The brush drawings are as good as ever; and not only artistic, but often drawn with wonderful fidelity to nature. I was particularly struck with the excellent account of the way in which the August holidays were spent by many students. The influence of the Ambleside teaching was apparent in the wonderful zest given to the holiday rambles both at home and abroad. It is to the highest credit of the teachers that they have been able to inspire their pupils with such fine enthusiasm.

The class list is appended below. Those students marked with an asterisk were specially commended by Mr. Tuckwell for their care of their gardens.

CLASS I.

E. M. BROOKES
M. E. WILLIS
B. GOODE
W. TIBBITS
H. E. WIX*
D. BROWNELL
A. M. COX
I. WHITE.

CLASS II.

Q. WILSON*
M. J. WOOLER
R. HOLLINS*
A. G. ROFFE*
D. L. THOMSON
M. MART

January 13th, 1904.

ALFRED THORNLEY.

Botanical Garden Report.

DEAR MISS MASON,—I must congratulate you on the advance of the garden and the zeal of the students as shown in the lists you have sent me. I should like to compliment the Misses Hollis, Wilson, Nix and Roffe on the good work which they have done in adding to their beds. I observe that the orders Leguminosæ, Compositæ, Rosaceæ, Umbelliferæ, call for similar zeal, and that, in a district like yours, more ferns might, perhaps, have been annexed. The two difficult orders, Juncaceæ and Cyperaceæ, require special attention. It might be worth while to attach to them the two most zealous and observant students you have.

Always faithfully yours,

W. TUCKWELL.

Waltham Rectory, Grimsby,
December 26th, 1903.

P.N.E.U. Literary Society.—Subject for February: A Selection of Poems, by Arthur Clough.

P.N.E.U. Translation Society.—Subject for February: From *Le Médecin Malgre Lui* (Molière).

C. AGNES ROOPER, *Hon. Sec.*,
Pen Selwood, Gervis Road, Bournemouth.

From whom all particulars may be obtained.

BOOKS.

Velasquez (Newnes Art Library, 3/6 net). Messrs. George Newnes, Ltd., have conferred another possession upon people who care for pictures and cannot afford great books. Those of us who saw the Velasquez Show in London a few years ago and were disappointed that they could not take away photographs, will be especially glad to have this volume with its 64 illustrations—good photographs on a broad page, shewing most of the best known pictures of the great master in a clear and forcible way. The reproductions of that most gallant little "Prince Balthasar Carlos" are especially good, and with them one pairs that most princely little maid, the "Infanta Marguerita." We have no space, nor indeed have we the power, to criticise the pictures reproduced